DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 322 057 SO 030 089

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TITLE The Status of the Arts in Education: A Summary from the Research Center.
INSTITUTION Northwest Educational Service District 189, Mount Vernon, WA.
PUB DATE May 90
NOTE 15p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Art Education; *Curriculum Development; Demonstration Programs; *Educational Change; Educational Development; Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; Program Development; School Districts; State Programs

ABSTRACT

This report is a summary of art programs research; an analysis of national, state, and local (Mount Vernon, Washington) art education is outlined. The analysis is constructed from: materials entered into the ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) system in the 1980s; the 1987 State of Arts Education in Washington Schools survey; and comments by the State Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts and others. National concerns in arts education as well as the specific concerns in Washington State are discussed in the context of the educational reform movement of the 1980s. The response to these concerns at both the national and state level is summarized. Model programs from around the nation are highlighted. Particular activities within Northwest ESD (Educational Service District) 189 are presented. A 32-item bibliography is included. (DB)

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THE STATUS OF THE ARTS IN EDUCATION

A Summary From the Research Center

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
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NORTHWEST ESD 189
NORTHWEST EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT 189

May 1990

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THE STATUS OF THE ARTS IN EDUCATION
A SUMMARY FROM THE RESEARCH CENTER

"Our society is desperately in need of individuals who are able to look at the old and the familiar in startling new ways. People who can -- as William Faulkner phrased it in his Nobel Prize address of 1950 -- 'make out of the materials of the human spirit something which was not there before.'

"Carl Sandburg expressed it when he wrote:

> Once having marched
> Over the margins of animal necessity,
> Over the grim line of sheer subsistence
> Then man came
> To the deeper rituals of his bones,
> To the dance, the song, the story,
> Or to the hours given over to dreaming,
> Once having so marched.

"Now more than ever, our children need to see clearly, hear acutely, and feel sensitively through the exquisite language of the arts....An artless school is an impoverished place reflecting a set of values boding ill for society."

So wrote Ernest Boyer, former Commissioner of Education and current President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, in an address prepared for a conference of the Getty Center for Education in the Arts in 1987.

"The harsh truth," he declared, "is that today, in all too many classrooms, creativity is denied. We are systematically training pedants who have lost a powerful view of themselves as creators, as significant makers of meaning, and as interpreters of personal experience."

His concern was not a new one then, nor has it been resolved in the intervening three years. Concern for the status of the arts in education, both nationally and in our state, remains acute, according to the following analysis of 1) materials entered into the ERIC System in the 1980's, 2) the 1987 State of Arts Education in Washington Schools survey, and 3) comments by the State Supervisor of Visual and Performing Arts, Gina May, and others. Following a summary of material from these sources, this paper will present some of the state and district models for improving the teaching of the arts in our region.

MAJOR CONCERNS IN ARTS EDUCATION

The two major concerns seem to be first, that there is too little support and encouragement for teaching the arts at all, and second, that when the arts are taught, they often are not taught in a meaningful way but as superficial activities.

During the 1970s, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) conducted two assessments of art abilities of elementary and secondary students and concluded that "due to emphasis on back-to-basics, the arts are not being nurtured as they might be, and efforts should be made to ensure that achievement levels in art and music do not erode further by 1) promoting greater awareness of the importance of art to physical and national well-being; 2) encouraging a more sophisticated view of art; 3) allocating state recommended minimum amounts of time to art and music; 4) employing certified art and music teachers; and 5) encouraging student participation in artistic endeavors." (Quotation from abstract, ED232958)

The "basics" identified by the famous Nation at Risk report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education in 1983 did not include the arts, much to the consternation of arts educators. Their responses ranged from calls to assure that "the arts must be seen as basic, not as extracurricular activities" (e.g. Terry Zeller in Art Education, July, 1984) to perhaps the most biting of the comments in the ERIC documents reviewed, made by Paul R. Lehman in a paper presented to the Music Educators National Conference in 1985: "Some ...assumptions...which in my opinion are flagrantly in error include: the purpose of education for society is to contribute to the nation's economy and to the gross national product. The National Commission on Excellence in Education...which failed to include the arts among its so-called 'Five New Basics'... is the prime offender in viewing education as being important largely for its contribution to the nation's economic welfare. It sees children in terms of their future roles in the marketplace and their potential contributions to international competition." At that time, the music educators' conference set goals for 1990, including access for every K-12 student to a "balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of music instruction taught by a qualified teacher" and a universal high school graduation requirement of at least one unit of credit in the arts.

The view that arts instruction is too often superficial is represented in two 1984 articles in Art Education, one by Enid Zimmerman, who writes that visual arts students were not learning knowledge and skills because art teachers were not teaching "art appreciation, art history, or design and drawing skills," and another by W. Reid Hastie, who deplores an emphasis on "the superficial and frivolous aspects of art" in elementary art education. The National Endowment for the Arts notes in its 1988 report discussed in the next section, "Americans also generally confuse the arts with entertainment which can be enjoyed without understanding."

To be meaningful, arts curriculum must teach students to appreciate art, to understand art in relation to cultures and to make judgments about the arts, not just to produce visual images or other products, argues Elliot Eisner, discussing the "discipline-based art education" concept promoted by the Getty

Center for Education in the Arts, in the Dec.1987-Jan.1988 Educational Leadership. Many others feel the arts should be taught in a way to reveal to our children the nature and diversity of culture, "the essence of civilization," as the National Endowment for the Arts calls it -- "the civilizations which have contributed to ours, and the more distant civilizations which enrich world civilization as a whole." Even the Congress, in calling for the NEA's report "recognizes that...arts and humanities education...enable students to recognize and appreciate...the diversity of excellence that describes our cultural heritage." Elliot Eisner elaborates: "The pot a youngster makes can be related to pots made in other cultures by other artists" (Greeks, Aztecs, French, Japanese, Chinese). Several articles in recent arts education journals make the case for a "multicultural approach to arts education," including one by Kristin Congdon which presents the "ways in which a variety of world views...can heighten the appreciation of art," and another by Theresa McCormick which posits that the multicultural approach "raises individual awareness and creates appreciation for one's own culture and that of others." In another article, Kristin Congdon explains further that "Multicultural education should show that we are all cultural individuals who use art as a communication system....people make different aesthetic choices and have varying value systems and lifestyles." (Quotes from ERIC abstracts of Congdon and McCormick articles.)

Finally, a kind of procedural concern is expressed by one essayist in the May 1987 issue of Basic Education, Dennis Gray, who cautions us that lobbying by proponents of each of the subject disciplines, including art, will necessitate a restructuring of the schools if they are all to be accommodated in the curriculum.

WASHINGTON STATE CONCERNS

In Washington State, concerns have been raised by the information collected in a 1987 survey of arts education in the state. That survey revealed that in 1987, "Fewer than one half of the districts (45.3%) reported that they had Board-Adopted Educational Goals with specific goal areas mentioning arts education. ....It would be fair to say that most Washington schools provide little or no instruction in dance education...no written curriculum K-12 (in Drama/Theatre) ... more than one half no written K-12 curriculum (in Visual Arts) (and) most no elementary art specialist." Music fares better with most districts, with 74.4% having a written curriculum K-12 at the time of the survey, but almost one half (45.2%) reporting less than a full-time music specialist. Overall, the survey found, "the majority of students in the elementary school spend little or no time in dance or drama, less than fifteen minutes per week in the visual arts and over thirty minutes per week in music. At the secondary level, more than one half (52.9%) of the districts reported having no district requirement in the arts for high school graduation.

Concern generated by such information is expressed in the needs section of the state's Comprehensive Arts Education Plan: "Because most of today's students have increasingly fewer

opportunities to receive a basic education in the arts, we, as educators, have an obligation to provide a strong arts education program in order to revitalize the opportunities for our students to reach their full creative potential."

NATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE CONCERNS

As part of the reauthorization of funding for the National Endowment for the Arts in 1985, Congress requested "a study of the state of arts education...as currently taught in the public elementary and secondary schools in the United States." The report was to contain "the Endowment's views of the role of the arts and humanities in elementary and secondary education" and "recommendations designed to encourage making arts and humanities education available throughout elementary and secondary schools. In the amendments calling for the study, the House Committee on Education and Labor noted, "...arts and humanities education play an important role in cognitive learning and in making the arts and humanities less elitist and more available to all citizens."

Toward Civilization: A Report on Arts Education, as the study report was called, was published in 1988. The overview states in boldface type: "The problem is: basic arts education does not exist in the United States today." Further, "the arts are in triple jeopardy: they are not viewed as serious; knowledge itself is not viewed as a prime educational objective; and those who determine school curricula do not agree on what arts education is." Regarding curriculum: "There is little agreement about the content of arts education: what should be required, what should be taught separately, what should be integrated into the teaching of other subjects....There is equal confusion about learning goals, how much students can absorb and at what grade levels....Curriculum guides are available to local districts. But these guides vary from state to state, and tend to emphasize narrowly focused skill outcomes at the expense of the art form as a whole and of the cultural significance of great works of art. Because many teachers lack a background in teaching the great works of art, they are unable to overcome this deficiency." Regarding evaluation: "Schools have little or no idea what their students are learning about the arts. Nowhere in the country is there any systematic, comprehensive, and formal assessment of student achievement in the arts..."

Generally, the report states, "There is a major gap between the stated commitment and resources available to arts education and the actual practice of arts education in the schools....In general, arts education in America is characterized by IMBALANCE, INCONSISTENCY AND INACCESSIBILITY. There is a curricular IMBALANCE in the relationship between the study of art and the performance and creation of art. There is INCONSISTENCY in the arts education students receive...(and) a comprehensive and sequential arts education is INACCESSIBLE except to a very few and often only to those with a talent or special interest."

On the bright side, the report tells us, "29 states have enacted high school graduation requirements which in some way include the arts, 27 of them in the past eight years...and 42 states require school districts to offer arts instruction in elementary, middle or secondary school." At the school district level...a growing number of districts now require units in the arts for graduation....(and) the number of districts reporting increases between 1982 and 1987 in the number of arts courses being offered is greater than those reporting decreases." (In Washington, the state high school graduation requirements include electives which may be taken in the arts area. "Perhaps 40%' of Washington school districts have some graduation requirement in the arts, says State Supervisor Gina May.)

However, "arts graduation requirements are often vague and sometimes listed as alternatives to requirements in other subject areas....Only nine states require arts courses per se for all students; seven more require them only for college-bound or honors-program students....Most elementary school classroom teachers have had little formal training in the arts."

The report tells us that student enrollments in music and visual arts courses are "substantial in grades seven and eight on a national basis, on the order of half the students in those grades....However, enrollment rates in these subjects drop precipitously in grades nine to 12....(10-20%)...and enrollments in all other arts courses are low for grades seven to 12 (12-14%).

NATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

"Requiring basic sequential arts education for all K-12 students is the primary recommendation of this report," states the ERIC abstract. The body of the full report proposes, "To make a start on a remedy...we suggest that 15% of the school week or year be allotted to the arts in elementary, middle and junior high and that the equivalent of two full years be allotted in high school....(This should be) the minimum high school requirement....(which) might be met either through arts courses per se or through making the arts integral parts of other courses."

Among the extensive additional curriculum recommendations in the report are these:

" State education agencies and local school districts should adopt and implement explicit policies to make such arts education a sequential part of the basic curriculum for all students in grades K-12. These policies should define the curriculum to include each of the arts...and provide for instruction in history and critical analysis as well as production and performance."

" State education agencies and school districts should identify, and achieve consensus on, the minimum knowledge and skills...that would satisfy state or district-mandated high school graduation requirements.

Curriculum guides should not emphasize "skill development at the expense of the art form as a whole" but should "provide nonspecialist teachers with practical information and minimum resources they need" (such as outlining the sequence of instruction and "listing works of art that might provide content...").

In addition, the report recommends, arts certification requirements should be strengthened for all teachers who will be responsible for teaching the arts, and procedures should be identified and implemented by state departments and school districts to test student achievement in the arts. Testing should address "creation, performance, history, critical analysis and the place of arts in society."

STATE ACTIONS

Several states undertook new arts initiatives in the 1980s. Reports of those from Michigan, Maryland, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Maine have been entered into the ERIC system, and can be called up by those wishing to learn more about them. The emphasis in these documents ranges from comprehensive state planning K-12 to general definition-and-purpose statements by state boards to various in-state models which may be chosen for teaching in arts areas.

In Washington State, the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requires that art and music must be offered to all students K-12. The State Board of Education mandates high school graduation requirements which include electives which may be taken in the arts. The Washington State Comprehensive Arts Education Plan mirrors the National Endowment for the Arts recommendations with a single major objective: "Provide every student K-12 with a comprehensive, sequential arts education." Strategies suggested in the Plan for accomplishing this goal include:

Curriculum Support Strategies:
Arts specialists for all levels; high school graduation requirements in all the arts; "adequate time and space during the school day for the arts;" arts education inservice for classroom teachers; and the use of artists in the schools and community arts resources.

Funding Strategies:
Adequate state funding, in-kind resources to support arts education and funding to develop an advisory program for arts education.

Advocacy Strategies:
State, regional and local coalitions and networks; identification/promotion of existing resources; and promotion of arts education legislation.

Evaluation Strategies:
Regularly scheduled assessments of "the scope of arts education" and a regularly scheduled review of the Plan.

State K-12 curriculum guidelines were published in 1987 and are available from the Superintendent of Public Instruction. These guidelines identify the "learning process components" of perceiving, experiencing, understanding, creating and aesthetic valuing in curriculum for dance, drama, music, and visual arts. They provide goals and objectives for introductory, intermediate and advanced levels in each of the content areas, and examples of the ways in which the learning process components can be addressed in each of the areas. A checklist for program evaluation is also included. These guidelines will be scheduled for review and possible revision in one or two years, with the possibility that more specific teaching recommendations may be added.

A resource book of model programs is being produced by the state chapter of the Alliance for Arts Education professional association. Now in draft form, the publication will be available from the association soon. (Contact Committee Chair Lael Williams, Edmonds.)

A new state project is being developed in music and technology, which will provide school districts with a resource book for teaching music and technology and with teacher training in this joint content area. The Superintendent of Public Instruction's office and the Washington Music Educators Association are collaborating in this project.

Achievement testing in arts areas is not generally being done systematically, Gina May reports, although there is considerable interest.

MODEL PROGRAMS

Model arts education programs entered into the ERIC system in the 1980s include "discipline-based art education" programs, multicultural art education programs, programs in which the arts are integrated into other curricula, and some individual programs -- for instance, one using a local decision-making process to identify arts curriculum content, another providing arts services to many districts, and a third demonstrating exemplary teaching.

"Discipline-based arts education" programs have been developed as a result of a "case study research project" conducted for the Getty Center for Education in the Arts and published in 1984 by the Rand Corporation, Art History, Art Criticism, and Art Production: An Examination of Art Education in Selected School Districts. This study verified for the Getty Center the view of earlier arts educators that proper education in the arts must go beyond "art production" or "art making" -- the traditional emphasis in visual arts instruction, in which encouraging creative expression and developing artistic skill are the major goals. Art history, art criticism and aesthetics must also be included. This newer approach to visual arts education is often called the "comprehensive" approach. The Getty/Rand study reviewed seven district-wide implementations of "discipline-based arts education" and found that "most of the criteria that define this approach to art education are present in all -- attention to productive,

historical and critical areas of art learning; a written curriculum; sequential and cumulative instruction; and the use of adult art works as exemplars." The districts studied were: Whitehall, Ohio; Hopkins, Minnesota; Palo Alto, California; Champaign and Decatur, Illinois; Brooklyn, New York, District 15, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Virginia Beach, Virginia. The study report said of these programs, "Most are well on their way to becoming exemplary models of discipline-based art education." (The process by which Virginia Beach identified its "core of art knowledge" is also described in "An Art Curriculum for All Students" in the December, 1987-January, 1988 Educational Leadership.)

Elliot Eisner, in the Educational Leadership article quoted above, further delineates the four components of the "discipline-based" approach as "the four major things that people do with art: they make it, they appreciate it, they understand it, and they make judgments about it. These processes are parallel to the disciplines of art production, art criticism, art history and aesthetics."

Multicultural arts education models include a collection of units developed by student teachers "to support humanistic, multicultural and environmental education." These are described by Rachel Mason in the July, 1987 Art Education. Also to be found in ERIC documents is a manual which presents a multicultural perspective on elementary and secondary music and art education, "Cultural Pluralism and the Arts: A Multicultural Perspective for Teacher Trainers in Art and Music." This manual has sections on both art and music, using traditional and contemporary concepts from African American, Native American and Hispanic American cultures. Background and interpretative information and classroom activities are included.

Arts are integrated into other curricula in such models as one in Los Angeles, described in a collection of issues essays entered into ERIC, called "What Place for the Arts?", Ed. David H. Lynn. Eight high schools in Los Angeles in 1987 began merging history, literature and the arts in studying selected periods of history.

Articles in the December, 1987-January, 1988 issue of Educational Leadership present several other types of models. "An Ordinary Lesson" describes the skill of an exemplary teacher, Mrs. Wainter of Ball Camp Elementary in Knoxville, TN, as she creates student interest and "takes advantage of that special 'Ah-Ha!' moment" while teaching an art appreciation lesson called, "Looking at Paintings." "The Arts Go to School in Rural Pennsylvania" describes a Pennsylvania cooperative headquartered at the University of Pennsylvania and supported by six school districts and various local, state and federal funding sources. The program provides arts programs and activities to the six districts based on formal and informal needs assessments. Six basic services are provided to enhance and supplement local teachers' efforts: inservice training, artist resources, field trips for students, special education, arts exhibits and curriculum materials.

NORTHWEST ESD 189 ACTIVITIES

Monroe, Marysville, Stanwood and Ferndale school districts are members of the Art Coop at Northwest ESD 189, the only such cooperative in the state. These districts, together with Snohomish, Mount Vernon, Everett, Sedro-Woolley and Edmonds school districts, make up the ESD 189 Arts Education Committee. ESD Superintendent Dr. Dennis Couch, a long-time supporter of arts education, is a First Vice-Chairman of the Washington State Arts Commission. Verne Fankhauser is the ESD Arts Education program manager.

Several models for arts education may be found among members of the Cooperative and the Arts Committee. The Edmonds School District, for example, is working toward the goal of a K-12 comprehensive arts curriculum. There are both music and visual/performing arts curricula for the elementary level and student learning objectives in the visual and performing arts for middle and high school levels. Work on both secondary visual/performing arts and secondary music curriculum writing will begin next year. The district requires two semesters (one credit) in the arts for high school graduation. Classes in drama are offered at both middle school and high school levels and three of the district's high schools offer classes in dance. Edmonds has two program managers in arts education: Lael Williams for visual/performing arts and Frank Demeiro for music. There are 47 music specialists, 19 visual arts specialists, 9 drama and 2 dance specialists in the Edmonds schools. Edmonds also has an artist-in-residence program, serving 21 schools this year for a minimum of two weeks each. The community has contributed $7,000 toward the funding of this program this year.

In Marysville, Elementary Art Helping Teacher Kaye Greff spends nine weeks in each elementary classroom, including special education, one hour each week, and provides inservice in developing a comprehensive arts program for teachers in the district as well as for all in the ESD who wish to attend her insevice classes at the ESD itself. A "Composers in the Classroom" music program, in which each grade level studies one composer all year, is getting started as an enhancement to the regular instructional program. Records, tapes, posters and biographies are available. The Art Print Program provides art prints in each elementary classroom and lessons about the artist and painting, logging "many hours of volunteer time."

Snohomish School District has had an artist-in-residence program since 1974, reports Marian Berge, Supervisor of Community Services, who was instrumental in forming the first ESD (then ISD) arts coop. The artist-in-residence program in that district provides an artist for one week in every building, usually including a program for special education students. Snohomish also has a docent program, through which members of the Snohomish Art Commission visit schools and show prints to classes.

In Ferndale, three programs serve teachers and students: inservice for elementary teachers, an artists-in-the-schools program and participation in the ESD Art Coop artist-in-residence program,

according to the office of Jim Gibson, Special Projects Director. This year, Kathy Hastings held three inservice workshops for elementary teachers, focusing on her "Fourth R Curriculum" and 1) language arts, 2) math, and 3) masks. The artists-in-the-schools program provides each school with a budget for an arts education program of its choice. This year one middle school brought in an artist to work with students on creative thinking through drawing; another hosted an author; one elementary school brought in a dance troupe, the Rainbow Dancers, who performed for students and worked with them on songwriting; and another elementary school hosted a Young Artists' Conference with some 15 visiting artists, including Lummi Tribe artists and other local professionals, which focused on a wide range of art production by students from water colors to clay and straw doll making.

Northwest ESD 189 has an art curriculum library with materials available to Coop members and provides an artist-in-residence resource guide and inservice training classes to those districts as well. All ESD Art Coop districts receive the quarterly newsletter, "The Lively Arts," and participate in the Coop's artist-in-residence program, which brings an artist to each district for five days to work directly with students in the classroom. The ESD Arts Committee coordinates an annual inservice, the "Living, Learning and the Arts Conference," at which 25-30 artists are brought in to work on both theory and practice primarily with elementary teachers, although teachers from all grade levels, and from elsewhere in the state, participate. The conference offers college credit.

Through the ESD, all districts in the ESD service area may participate in the annual state high school art contest of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

CONCLUSION

Although there is a dearth of hard data documenting the impact of arts education on student development, there is much positive activity in arts education across the nation, and in our state and region. The overall message of the material analyzed in this brief, however, shows that much has yet to be done to implement arts education as a basic component of most schools' curriculum.

Those who speak in the ERIC documents, educational journal articles, state department of education and in our ESD seem unanimously agreed, however, that the effort must be made. To quote the National Endowment for the Arts report once more, "There are four reasons why arts education is important: To understand civilization, to develop creativity, to learn the tools of communication, and to develop the capacity for making wise choices

among the products of the arts." And finally, from Ernest Boyer: "Art is humanity's most essential, most universal language. It is not a frill, but a necessary part of communication. The quality of civilization can be measured through its music, dance, drama, architecture, visual art and literature. We must give our children knowledge and understanding of civilization's most profound works."

- J. Newman
Northwest ESD 189

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